

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 13 and 15-20 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 21 and 22 have been added. New claim 21 corresponds to claim 1, but does not include “means” language. New claim 22 is a method claim corresponding to claim 1. Claims 1-12, 14 and 21-22 are pending.

Election/Restriction

The Office Action argues that claim 1 is not generic. While applicants do not agree, this point is moot in light of the cancellation of non-elected claims 15-19.

Drawings

The drawings were objected to. Figures 22 and 23 have been respectively amended to label the blocks 141 and 151 as “Data input means”. The specification has been amended to refer to the references numerals 125, 131, 132, 133, 134, 142, 143, 144, 145, 152, 153, 154, 155, 162, 163 and 164. Additionally, the reference to “156” on page 31, line 16 of the application has been changed to “146”. Accordingly, applicants submit the objection to the drawings has been overcome.

Title

The title has been amended to be indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim objections

Claims 1, 13 and 20 were objected to for informalities. The subject matter of original claim 13 has been incorporated into claim 1, wherein claim 1 has been amended to address the issues relating to both original claim 13 and original claim 1. Claim 20 has been cancelled, thereby rendering the objection to that claim moot. Accordingly, applicants submit that the objections to the claims has been overcome.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. This rejection is moot with respect to claim 13, which has been canceled. The subject matter of original claim 13 has been incorporated into claim 1, wherein claim 1 has been amended to address the issues relating to original claim 13. Accordingly, applicants submit that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph has been overcome.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1, 4-7, 11, 12 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,549,657 to Ohta ("Ohta"). Claims 2 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohta embodiment 3 in view of Ohta embodiment 4. Claims 8-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohta in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0013953 to Uekusa et al. ("Uekusa"). Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohta in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,875,036 to Sasanuma ("Sasanuma"). Insofar as these rejections can be applied to the claims as amended, Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

These rejections are moot in light of the cancellation of claim 20, and the amendment to independent claim 1 to include the subject matter of claim 13, which has not been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or § 103. Thus independent claim 1 is believed to be in allowable form. Dependent claims 2-12 and 14 ultimately depend from claim 1 and are likewise allowable.

New claims 21 and 22 include limitations corresponding to claim 1, and are patentable for analogous reasons.

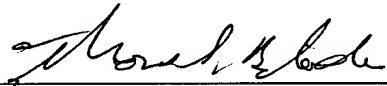
Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance.
Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date October 11, 2005

By 

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Amendments to the Drawings:

The drawing sheets attached in connection with the above-identified application containing Figures 22 and 23 are being presented as new formal drawing sheets to be substituted for the previously submitted drawing sheets. The drawing Figures 22 and 23 have been amended. Appended to this amendment is an annotated copy of the previous drawing sheet which has been marked to show changes presented in the replacement sheet of the drawing.

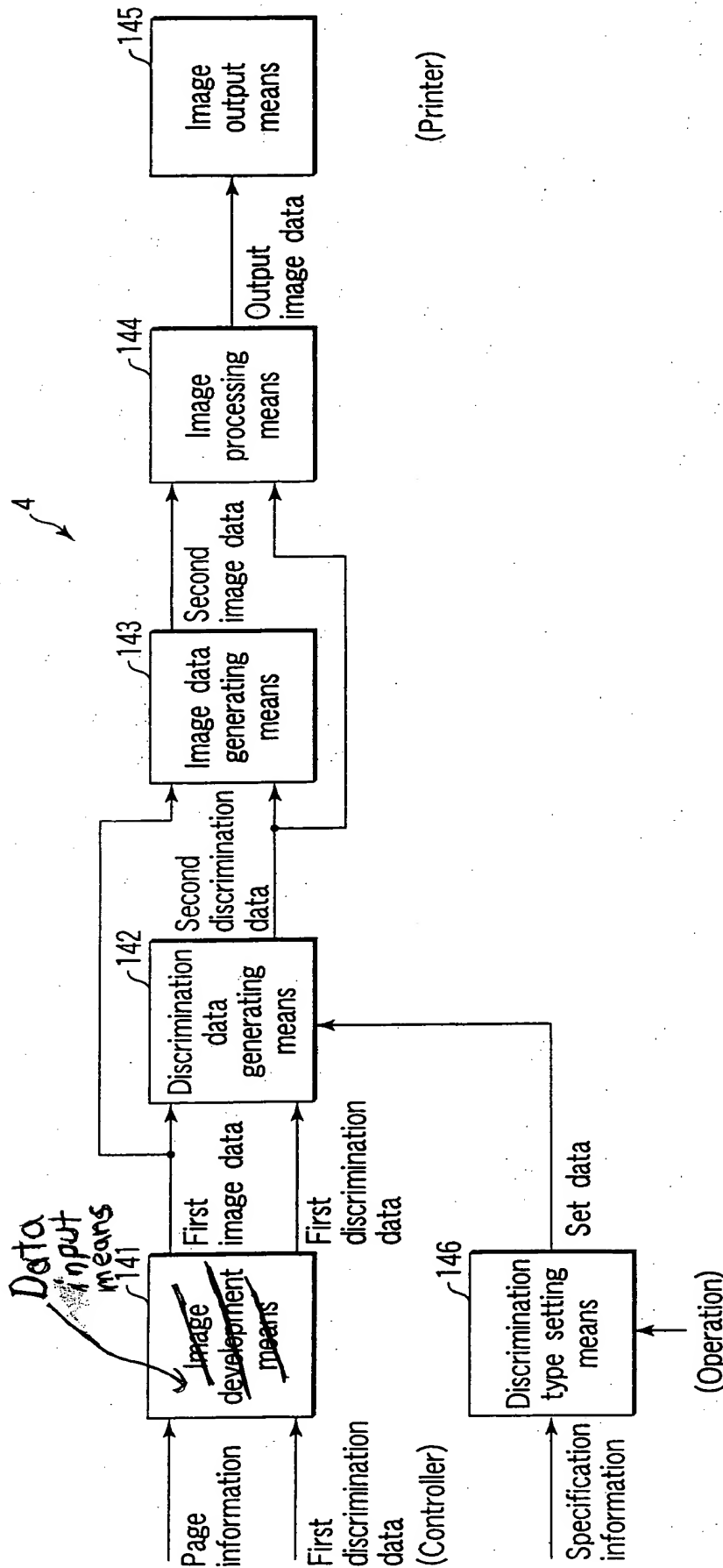


FIG. 22

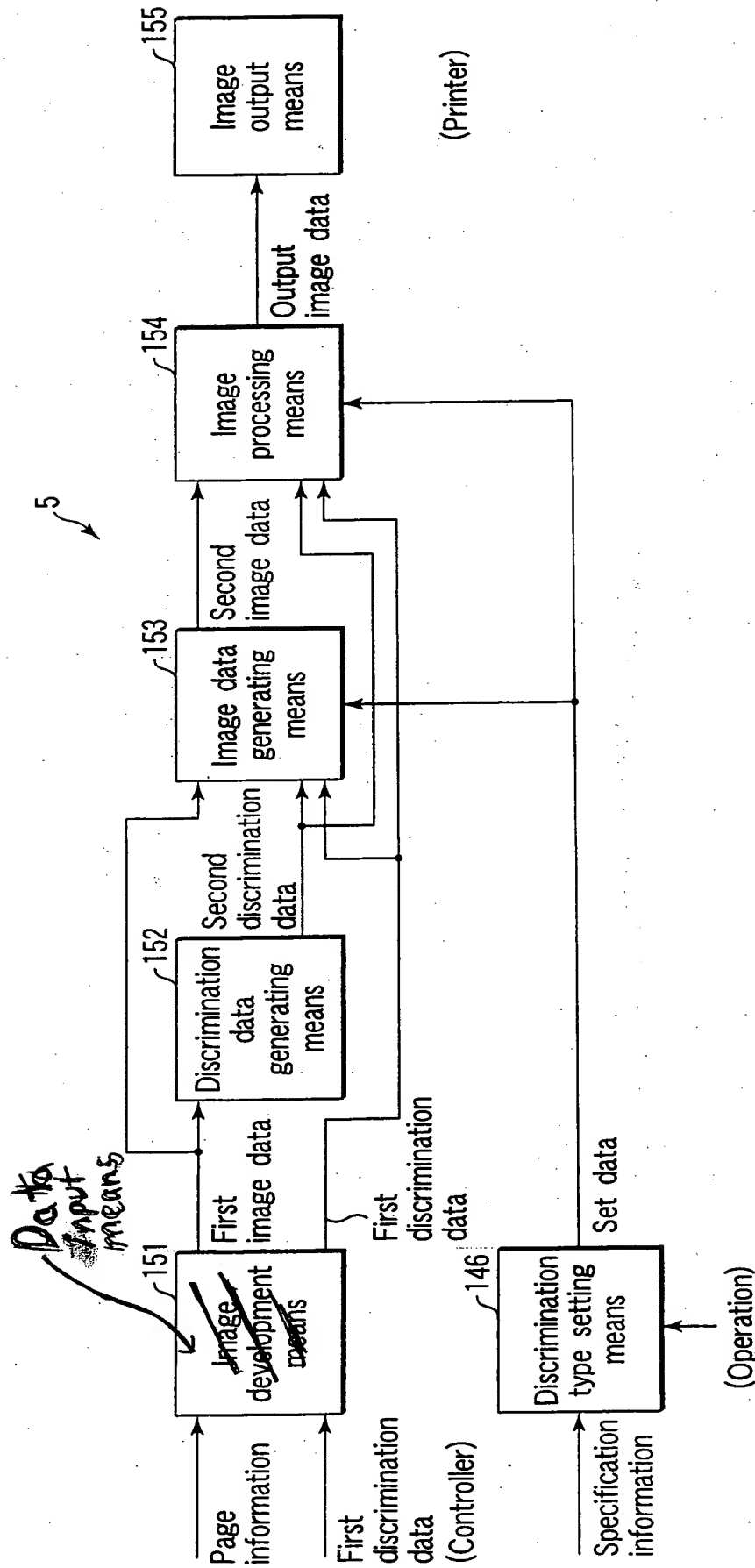


FIG. 23